

Governor's Column
By Governor Matt Blunt

Promoting Strategic Investments in Math and Science

Education is my highest priority, and I am committed to ensuring that our children receive a world class education that prepares them for the challenges of the future.

In addition to sending more than a half a billion dollars in new funding to Missouri schools over the past three years, we are promoting strategic investments in math and science to ensure that students in classrooms across the state have the necessary skills to succeed in the competitive, technology based economy and careers of the future.

In the 21st Century, Missouri children are not just competing with each other, or the children of neighboring states for the jobs; they are competing with the children of India, China, and other countries around the world. To give our children the opportunity to reach their full potential, we must provide them with a world-class education in math, engineering, technology, and science (METS).

As governor, I created the METS Alliance to create an action plan for preparing Missouri students for our global economy, and making our state a leader in METS education. One of the Alliance's recommendations was to increase the number of technology classrooms around the state. A program called eMINTS provides each classroom with intensive, sustained professional development for teachers on how to incorporate the use of technology more effectively in their teaching. Classrooms are equipped with technology that includes one computer for every two students, a teacher laptop, a digital camera, a printer, and a SMART board and projector.

Teachers in eMINTS schools report higher levels of student motivation and better attendance. More importantly, over the past six years, students in eMINTS classrooms have shown consistent improved results on state tests in language arts, math, science, and social studies. As a result, we have expanded the program to reach more than 1,400 classrooms throughout the state. And this year, my budget included \$2.9 million to expand the eMINTS program to another 100 classrooms in 100 schools across the state emphasizing math and science curriculum.

This increase was complemented by a \$1 million expansion of an afterschool program emphasizing math, science, health, and wellness; and \$250,000 for the Advanced Placement program to provide up to 50 percent reimbursement for students taking AP math or science exams, and \$100,000 for professional development to certify additional teachers to teach AP courses.

These programs will help ensure Missouri students have the opportunities they need to fulfill their dreams and become active participants in the economy of the future.